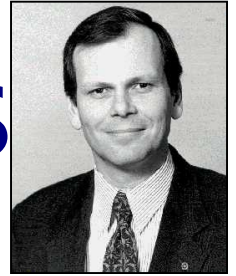


NEIGHBORHOOD News

FROM SUPERVISOR KAUFFMAN



Dear Neighbor:

We need more tools than the State gives us to protect the integrity of our neighborhoods. Fed up with waiting for the State to give us enabling legislation, two years ago I invited Supervisor Mendelsohn to join me in a bi-partisan initiative to get greater control of infill development. (That is, new homes built in established neighborhoods. Basically, almost all the development that we see in Lee District meets that description.)

We asked the Board of Supervisors to examine how the County approaches new residential development. After extensive County staff and Planning Commission review, public meetings, and comments, on January 22 the Board of Supervisors accepted the Planning Commission Recommendations Report for the Infill and Residential Development Study. A number of reforms are proposed to the current development process to make it more responsive to citizen concerns and better handle such issues as adequate buffering, environmental preservation, proper drainage controls, traffic congestion, and cut-through traffic.

I would like to share the comments that I made to the Board of Supervisors on January 22.

"The case has been strongly made by many that 'infill' is smart growth. However, just as 'sprawl' has become a popular term for the spread of new development, we must avoid what I'll call "jamming." A new term I'll coin to refer to the real impacts of un-checked infill development on existing neighborhoods, public facilities, and tree cover.

This whole review began in response to a joint board matter from February 22, 1999, over two years ago. Our concern then, and our concern now, remains adequate buffering, tree preservation, proper drainage controls, and tools to manage serious transportation issues tied to congestion and cut-through traffic.

The action being advanced has been through an exhaustive public review. There have been some 20 public meetings since staff first pulled together an approach to the challenges we raised.

The action plan, which comes to us after detailed review by the Planning Commission, has enough real reforms to make area developers nervous. And that's a good thing. The 12 or more proposed Zoning Ordinance Amendments this action will advance finally begin the process of making some antiquated aspects of our development process more responsive to the real concerns of today's County residents.

The range of amendments includes:

- ❑ Revising development density criteria—to better recognize its real impact on things like our schools, affordable housing, and open space;
- ❑ Revising how we approach Planned Development Housing (PDH) zones to better preserve streams, flood plains, environmentally sensitive areas along with the provision of adequate parking;
- ❑ Increasing community notice and public outreach on development proposals;

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(Cover letter continued)

- ❑ Developing performance criteria for mandating traffic calming and cut-through protection measures;
- ❑ Modifying development requirements to mandate pedestrian walkways as a part of developments close to parks and other public facilities;
- ❑ Advancing recommendations of the Tree Preservation Task Force; and
- ❑ Improving erosion and sediment control requirements and their enforcement.

Where the Planning Commission recommendation falls short is in:

- ❑ Giving guidance on how development proposals are to be handled if we are forced by the State to allow cluster developments by right; and
- ❑ Updating our close to quarter century old transitional screening requirements to reflect the need to buffer established residential communities from new residential communities.

Supervisor Mendelsohn and I have moved to add these key missing items to the recommended actions. Also, as we all knew from the onset of the review, we still must await State action before we can ever realize the ability to better time the pace of development and mitigate its impact on our public roads and schools.

Is this set of recommendations perfect? No. But it is an overdue start and staff must do everything it can to quickly bring the priority action items back to us. It's been two years well spent to get us to this point but I don't know how much longer the public is willing to wait."

Sincerely,

Dana Kauffman
Your Lee District Supervisor

EPG TASK FORCE

The EPG (Engineer Proving Ground) is the largest piece of developable land left in our area and what happens to it once the Army sells it will have a significant impact on this area. The EPG's 820 acres are now virtually unused, with the exception of about 20 employees housed in one small building. (Most of the site lies between Backlick Road and Rolling Road.) A citizen task force recently completed its work and has released a plan to guide the future development of this 820-acre site. The new plan amends the County's Comprehensive Land Use Plan and supercedes the outdated 1995 plan, reducing the development potential of the site. It also eliminates the possibility that a major sports stadium could be built on the site and cuts by two-thirds the potential residential units. The Plan preserves about 480 acres (the entire western section of the site) to be used for public parkland. Instead of a stadium for professional sports, the task force recommends a quality regional athletic facility for our youth.

What Happens Next?

Mark your calendars for two important public hearings. On June 28, the Task Force's recommendations will be heard by the Planning Commission and a month later, on July 23, the Board of Supervisors will hold its public hearing, to be followed by a Board vote on the recommendations.

(Citizens may testify at the Board of Supervisors public hearing by contacting the Clerk to the Board at 703-324-3151 and asking to be placed on the speakers list.)

THE COUNTY BUDGET: WHEN YOU'RE IN A HOLE, STOP DIGGING!

The Board of Supervisors has adopted reasonable budget guidelines for next year's FY2003 budget calling for both County government and the schools to hold increases in spending to projected increases in revenue. We have also called for both the County and the Schools to conduct a Lines of Business review of programs and services over the next year. A line of business review will give us tools to analyze the cost effectiveness of the programs and services we offer and to identify areas of duplication and opportunities for scaling back unnecessary or under performing programs.

Continued next page

(County Budget cont.)

While the school system has been less than enthusiastic about this approach, I hope they will ultimately sign on to this realistic budgeting methodology. Our children and our school system are our priority- but we cannot continue to disproportionally fund that priority on the backs of homeowners and senior citizens. If we do, it will only be a matter of time before we are looking at a taxpayer revolt.

This isn't going to be an easy task and no one wants to see his or her pet program on the cutting room floor. There is no way around it though. As that old saying goes, "the first thing you do when you're in a hole, is stop digging."

KEEPING FAITH WITH THE OLD

Over the past several years the County has made a significant investment in its older commercial areas through its revitalization program. The FY2002 budget recognized the community's commitment to revitalization. We included funding to support the local revitalization groups in their marketing and promotional efforts. Route One and Springfield capital projects include Kings Crossing (Penn Daw Area) and Springfield Town Center development.

APPROVED CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (CIP)

As part of the FY2002 budget, the Board adopted the FY2002-FY2006 CIP that provides for a number of capital improvements in Lee District. The Board approved—subject to voter referendum—school construction bond sales of \$100 million. There are a number of CIP projects that directly benefit our district. They include the Route One animal shelter, and Springfield and Route One redevelopment projects. We approved renovation funding for Edison, Hayfield, and Lee high schools, along with Groveton, Hybla Valley, Hayfield, and Rose Hill elementary schools and Key and Twain middle schools. A new school—Island Creek Elementary—is included in the CIP. Funding is also available for parks and athletic fields and transportation improvements.

Space limits the amount of information that we can print in this newsletter. Please call my office at (703-971-6262) if you would like additional information about any of these stories.

Telegraph Road and Growth Controls

Because the tools the Commonwealth of Virginia gives us to control development are scarcer than the proverbial hen's teeth, we need to find creative ways to make sure that our land use plans and transportation plans inhabit the same universe.

On February 26, on my motion, the Board of Supervisors unanimously approved a Special Study to look at land use and transportation along the Telegraph Road corridor from Beulah Street to the Beltway. Telegraph Road is a heavily traveled two-lane roadway and VDOT plans and funding to widen it are far from solid. Currently, it looks like 2011 before we will see the entire length of Telegraph improved. At the same time, land along this corridor is planned as if the road improvements were already in place. Clearly, there is a disconnect between land use planning and transportation construction.

The text of my board matter follows:

Background

There are numerous vacant and underutilized properties along the Telegraph Road corridor from Beulah Street to the Beltway that are subject to future development. I am very concerned about how future development in this corridor can take place under current plan language. Continued State delays in implementing transportation improvements needed to ease congestion on Telegraph Road coupled with severe environmental constraints, most notably, steep slopes and poor soils, have not been adequately addressed or linked to achievable density levels. I believe that a special study is needed to re-focus the planning for these properties in light of these environmental constraints and the limited transportation access which, for the most part, is oriented solely to Telegraph Road, one of the County's busiest arterial roadways.

Motion

Therefore, Madam Chairman, I move that the Board of Supervisors authorize a Special Study to look at land use and transportation for vacant and underutilized properties in the Telegraph Road corridor from Beulah Street to the Beltway. This special study must also look at ways of preserving environmental features and improving transportation capacity and access in this part of Lee District.

The Telegraph Road study should begin this summer and continue through to December or early next year.

LEE DISTRICT NIGHTS

Free family concerts in the amphitheater at Lee District Park! The concerts will be outdoors at the Lee District Park amphitheater and begin at **7:30 p.m.** We encourage you to enjoy an al fresco mid-week break with family and friends. Bring a picnic dinner and a blanket and sit back and enjoy the show.

- June 6** LaSalle Dance Orchestra, Big Band
- June 13** Daryl Davis Trio, Jazz
- June 20** Lonesome River Band, Bluegrass
- June 27** Swing Shift, Swing
- July 4** No Show
- July 11** Brooks Tegler Band, Jazz
- July 18** Fairfax Symphony Summer Band, Classic
- July 25** Charivari, Cajun
- August 1** Fairfax Symphony German Band, German
- August 8** Hot Jazz Orchestra, Jazz
- August 15** Mariachi Los Amigos, Mexican Music
- August 22** National Concert Band, Big Band
- August 29** The Grandsons, Rockabilly/Country

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Be sure to check out the on-line version of Neighborhood News and look for new messages from Supervisor Kauffman throughout the year!

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8:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Monday through Friday

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